



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/531,304	04/14/2005	Shigeaki Ueda	017.0001	6429
29453	7590	08/17/2007	EXAMINER	
JUDGE & MURAKAMI IP ASSOCIATES DOJIMIA BUILDING, 7TH FLOOR 6-8 NISHITEMMA 2-CHOME, KITA-KU OSAKA-SHI, 530-0047 JAPAN			PICKETT, JOHN G	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		3728		
		MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE	
		08/17/2007	PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/531,304	UEDA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Greg Pickett	3728	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 April 2005.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-4 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-4 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on 14 April 2005 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
- Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Information Disclosure Statement

1. The listing of references in the specification is not a proper information disclosure statement. 37 CFR 1.98(b) requires a list of all patents, publications, or other information submitted for consideration by the Office, and MPEP § 609.04(a) states, "the list may not be incorporated into the specification but must be submitted in a separate paper." Therefore, unless the references have been cited by the examiner on form PTO-892, they have not been considered.
2. The references cited in the Search Report of PCT/JP03/13236, mailed 20 January 2004, have been considered, but will not be listed on any patent resulting from this application because they were not provided on a separate list in compliance with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(1). In order to have the references printed on such resulting patent, a separate listing, preferably on a PTO/SB/08A and 08B form, must be filed within the set period for reply to this Office action.

Drawings

3. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the cut point of the turned down portion of lateral rib recited in claim 3, must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action.

The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Objections

4. Claim 1 is objected to because of the following informalities:

Claim 1 presents several errors in correlating claimed structures to the part numbers depicted in the drawings. For example, in line 2, the claim recites "cassette (3), whereas the cassette is previously identified as a item (4).

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

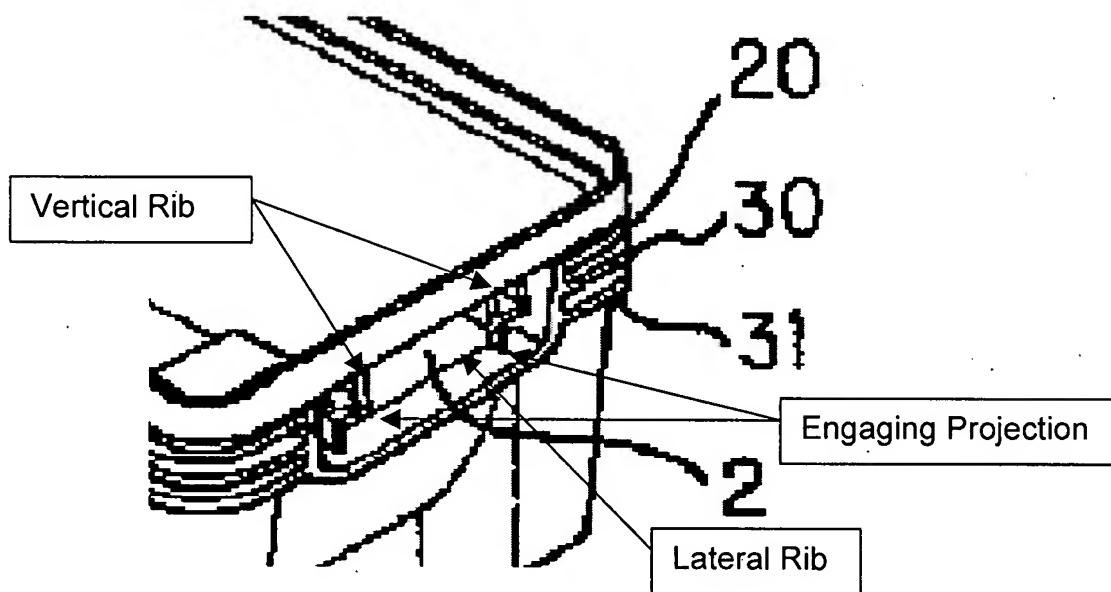
1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

5. Claims 1, 2, and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohori (JP 2002-110775 A) in view of Letica (US 4,349,119).

Claim 1: Ohori discloses a container comprising a container body 1, a container lid 2, a cassette 3, a cassette lid 8, an L-shaped flange 10, a first flange 20, and a second flange 30. Ohori further discloses a D-zone (portion with locking part 2), the D-

zone having a lateral rib and two engaging projections provided on interconnecting vertical ribs (see below).



Ohori functions as claimed. Ohori lacks, or does not expressly disclose, vertical ribs between the first and second flanges, the specific distance between the first and second flanges, or the recessed D-zone.

Letica teaches vertical ribs between perimeter flanges on a plastic container to reinforce the perimeter flanges (see for example (Col. 3, lines 28-32). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the first and second flanges of Ohori with vertical ribs as taught by Letica in order to reinforce the perimeter flanges. "[I]f a technique has been used to improve one device, and a person of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that it would improve similar devices in the same way, using the technique is obvious unless its actual

application is beyond that person's skill." *KSR Int'l v. Teleflex Inc.*, 127 S.Ct. 1740, 82 USPQ2d 1396 (2007).

As to the recessed D-Zone, one of ordinary skill in the art, when observing Ohori, would note that the D-zone has a perimeter to distinguish it from flanges 20 and 30 (see Figure 1). Moreover, the side view of Figure 2 does not show any projecting components beyond the extent of flanges 20 and 30. In viewing these depictions, one of ordinary skill in the art would have found it beneficial and obvious to recess the D-zone (and thereby the lateral rib) in order to prevent any snagging portions extending beyond the extent of perimeter flanges 20 and 30. The drawings must be evaluated for what they reasonably disclose and suggest to one of ordinary skill in the art. *In re Aslanian*, 590 F.2d 911, 200 USPQ 500 (CCPA 1979). MPEP § 2125. It is proper to take account of the "inferences and creative steps that a person of ordinary skill in the art would employ." See *KSR Int'l Co. v. Teleflex Inc.*, 550 U.S. 1727, 1731, 82 USPQ2d 1385, 1396 (2007). See also *id.* at 1742, 82 USPQ2d at 1397 ("A person of ordinary skill is also a person of ordinary creativity, not an automaton.")

With respect to the distance between the first and second flanges, it has been held that, where the only difference between the prior art and the claims is a recitation of relative dimensions of the claimed device and a device having the claimed relative dimensions would not perform differently than a prior art device, the claimed device is not patentably distinct from the prior art device. *Gardner v. TEC Systems, Inc.*, 725 F.2d 1338, 220 USPQ 777 (Fed. Cir. 1984), cert. denied, 469 U.S. 830, 225 USPQ 232 (1984).

Claim 2: Ohori discloses a channel 11 and angled upper and lower sides of flanges 20 and 30 (see Figure 8).

Claim 4: Ohori-Letica, as applied to claim 1 above, discloses the claimed invention except for the specific spacing of the vertical ribs. It has been held that, where the only difference between the prior art and the claims is a recitation of relative dimensions of the claimed device and a device having the claimed relative dimensions would not perform differently than a prior art device, the claimed device is not patentably distinct from the prior art device. *Gardner v. TEC Systems, Inc.*, 725 F.2d 1338, 220 USPQ 777 (Fed. Cir. 1984), cert. denied, 469 U.S. 830, 225 USPQ 232 (1984).

6. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohori-Letica as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Johnson (US 4,520,925).

Ohori-Letica, as applied to claim 1, discloses the claimed invention except for the turned-down lateral tabs.

Johnson teaches turned-down lateral tabs 96 & 98 for provision of a flush surface and protection against accidental opening (see for example Col. 4, lines 41-45). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the container of Ohori-Letica with lateral tabs as taught by Johnson in order to provide of a flush surface and protect against accidental opening.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Greg Pickett whose telephone number is 571-272-4560. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri, 11:30 AM - 8:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mickey Yu can be reached on 571-272-4562. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Greg Pickett/
Examiner
Art Unit 3728